

**The New COIN of the Domestic Realm: How the Military
Services Can Combine Emerging Warfighting Doctrine
with Innovative Methods of Interagency Coordination to
Provide Improved Disaster Response and Relief**

A Monograph

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ABSTRACT

THE NEW COIN OF THE DOMESTIC REALM: HOW THE MILITARY SERVICES CAN COMBINE EMERGING WARFARE DOCTRINE WITH INNOVATIVE METHODS OF INTERAGENCY COORDINATION TO PROVIDE IMPROVED DISASTER RESPONSE AND RELIEF, by Major Steven J. Hildebrand, US Army, 60 pages.

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INTRODUCTION

“The fact is, in Katrina, government failed. The Federal Government failed, the state of Louisiana failed, the city of New Orleans failed, and for 22,000 citizens in the lower Ninth Ward, citizenship failed . . . and so you have to look at that experience and say, “How much would you have to change each of these four layers so that if it happened again you didn’t have the same failure?”.¹

-Newt Gingrich

“It seems the rescue effort is turning into an urban war game: An imaginary domestic version of the total victory that eludes America in Baghdad will be imposed here, on New Orleans. It’s almost as if the Tigris – rather than the Mississippi – had flooded the city. The place feels like a sick theme park – Macho World – where cops, mercenaries, journalists, and weird volunteers of all sorts are playing out a relatively safe version of their militaristic fantasies about Armageddon and the cleansing iron fist.”

“The young soldiers of the 82nd Airborne and First Cavalry [veterans of counterinsurgency and stability operations overseas] seem much less caught up in it and are quite generous with their ice and their MREs.”²

Christian Parenti, *The Nation*

¹ Gingerich, Newt. “Living in the Age of Transformation.” *Milton S. Eisenhower Symposium*, The Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, MD. DVD. C-SPAN, 2006. At 23:02.

² Reed, Betsy (ed). *Unnatural Disaster: The Nation on Hurricane Katrina*. New York: Nation Books, 2006, pp. 155-156.

Two watershed events of the mid-first decade of the third millennium brought to light for government officials – military and non-military alike – the realization that inter-agency cooperation was more than just a trendy catchphrase. First, the initial victory during major combat operations to remove Saddam Hussein from power in Iraq – “Mission Accomplished” – devolved into a counterinsurgency fight that further spread into sectarian violence as the process of rebuilding a country from scratch proved to be a more complex task than originally thought. The resources provided by our government for the task, just heavy enough on the military side but far too light with respect to the other elements of national power, proved inadequate for the job at hand.

Then, as the United States was beginning to recognize the evolving situation in Iraq and to formulate a plan that would provide the necessary resources to deal with the emerging realities there, a natural disaster of epic proportions – the flooding of the Louisiana and Mississippi Gulf coasts by Hurricane Katrina – exposed domestic bureaucratic ineptitudes at the local, state, and federal levels that suggested that our real problems in Iraq weren’t necessarily brought about primarily by the actions of the enemy. Perhaps our troubles were of our own making, inherent in how we have grown comfortable in our way of doing business.

Emerging doctrine predicated at solving the difficulties of the modern battlefield – most specifically Army Field Manual (FM) 3-24, *Counterinsurgency*, recognizes that while military forces can set the conditions for success in supporting friendly foreign governments by establishing a safe and secure environment and providing essential services during the initial phases of operations, it will require the full cooperation of and investment by a multitude of partners – other U.S. government agencies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), international governmental and non-governmental entities, and the indigenous government at the national, regional, and local levels – to achieve success in the aspects of nation-building that do not come naturally to the military. Economic development, the establishment of legitimate and effective governance, the building of major infrastructure assets such as hospitals and schools, are

all tasks that are better planned and coordinated by professionals trained in those specific disciplines. It is the military's role simply to provide the secure foundation on which these other tasks may be accomplished.

The main thesis of this monograph is that these same basic guidelines for maximizing interagency cooperation and for focusing military capabilities on establishing security and providing for the establishment of basic services that underpin the counterinsurgency warfighting model can be successfully transferred to the task of providing support to civil authorities during disaster response operations. Although the method of infliction in these two cases may be different, the result is the same: the capacity of the government is damaged, and the military is called to respond in order to provide security and sustenance to the populace in order to re-establish normalcy and thereby reaffirm the legitimacy of the society's governing institutions. The purpose, therefore, is to demonstrate how the proper use of military assets, in close coordination with civilian governmental and non-governmental authorities during the planning and execution of disaster relief operations can have a positive impact on the timely restoration of expected levels of societal function following a disaster.

A case study of the Hurricane Katrina disaster provides a useful model for demonstrating how a lack of coordination across interagency and intergovernmental lines can leave significant portions of the population without adequate support in times of greatest need. Likewise, it can reveal circumstances in which, had military assets been utilized properly during the planning and execution of relief operations, assistance would have reached a greater portion of the affected population in a more timely fashion. Finally, such an evaluation reveals the positive impact provided by individuals and organizations, to include military personnel and units, which conducted operations similar in style to those demonstrated to be useful in a counterinsurgency environment.

This comparison between current U.S. Army/Marine Corps counterinsurgency doctrine and the actions required of a military force conducting disaster response operations provides

useful insight into the similarities between the two operations. Specifically, one is drawn to the importance in both cases of influencing the “indifferent majority” of the legitimacy of government efforts to solve the problems at hand in a timely and efficient manner. This is best done in both instances by gathering information about local conditions by sensors “on the ground” – that is, through active, initiative-driven patrolling – and then leveraging the assets of various governmental and non-governmental agencies to produce positive effects. In all cases, the event should serve to publicize and legitimize the role of the constituted government at the local, regional, and national levels through a robust and synchronized information operations campaign.

Of course, while it is possible to achieve at least limited real and perceived success on a spontaneous or ad hoc basis, more immediate and measurable results come about through effective planning. While deployed military forces and their interagency partners in theater benefit from collocation and the regularity of an established battle rhythm, the ability of disaster response professionals to achieve such synchronicity is more difficult. One proposed solution to this disparity is the establishment of an “interagency base” concept whereby key federal and state agencies, and some civilian organizations, establish permanent operations centers directly on a military base. Such a proposal is currently being debated in southeastern Pennsylvania along the strategic Boston-New York-Philadelphia-Baltimore-DC corridor; the idea is attracting attention at all levels of government as a potential solution to the problem of effective interagency cooperation in disaster response planning, preparation, and execution.

Through the recognition of effective and ineffective military action and interagency cooperation during the Katrina disaster, the analysis of similarities between current counterinsurgency methods and the requirements of domestic emergency response operations, and by illuminating the potential of future interagency cooperation inherent in the “interagency base” concept, this paper will serve to demonstrate the usefulness of applying current and emerging warfighting doctrine to the practice of civil support operations.

CHAPTER ONE

A DISASTER WITHIN A DISASTER: UNCOOPERATION, AND THE RESULTING FAILURE OF EMERGENCY RESPONSE

To document the tragic comedy of errors that was the federal, state, and local preparation for and response to Hurricane Katrina would take volumes; indeed, dozens if not hundreds of books, articles, and government reports have detailed when, where, and how mistakes were made by government agencies and the people charged with running them. While the task of disaster relief is, above all, a civilian-led and not a military-led one, there are lessons learned from the Katrina disaster that can be remedied through analysis of how better civilian-military cooperation, before and after the fact, can address noted shortcomings in the planning, preparation, and execution of disaster relief operations.

In order to understand where improved civilian-military cooperation can benefit local, state, and federal government efforts to respond to domestic emergencies, it will be necessary to

review some of the mistakes made by these agencies during the Katrina disaster, with special emphasis on areas where military cooperation could have, if applied in a conscientious and timely manner, made a positive difference in the outcome of the operation. The Army Field Manual (FM) 3-28 *Civil Support Operations*, currently in its draft form, provides emerging doctrinal support for these actions.

The military's role in civil support operations can be divided into three primary tasks: providing essential services support, providing support to civil law enforcement, and providing other support as required.³ These tasks can be performed during planning or execution of disaster response operations.

Planning & Preparation

Disaster response planning should begin with a focus on people: specifically, how to keep them out of harm's way to begin with or, after a disaster has occurred, how to efficiently remove them from the affected area – once the safety and security of the populace is assured, then repairs and improvements of damaged or neglected infrastructure can take place in due time. In short, this means that communities must have in place well thought out evacuation plans, and

³ FM 3-28 Civil Support Operations (Draft), p.1-3

citizens – as well as government officials – should know how and when to implement them.

Indeed, a review of local and regional emergency preparedness plans conducted by the Department of Homeland Security in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina found that evacuation planning was among the areas needing significant improvement.⁴

Such a plan existed for New Orleans, and it had been implemented on a volunteer basis in the days leading up to Katrina's landfall, but to order a mandatory evacuation was something that very few government officials were prepared to do. New Orleans mayor Ray Nagin, in office less than a year when Katrina hit and therefore unfamiliar with his responsibilities in an emergency situation, spent several days in consultation with city attorneys to determine if he even had the legal authority to order such a move. When he did eventually ask citizens to voluntarily evacuate, he downplayed the risk of the impending storm, and thus reduced the effectiveness of his evacuation request.⁵

Effective coordination between adjacent communities was likewise a hindrance to the safe and orderly evacuation of New Orleans residents. In Jefferson Parish just outside of New Orleans proper, Sheriff Henry Lee refused to let evacuees from the city cross a bridge into his

⁴ Smith, Sandy. "Review of Nationwide Preparedness Finds Evacuation Planning, Resource Management, Lacking". *Homeland Response*, August 9, 2006

⁵ Brinkley, Douglas. *The Great Deluge*. New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2006, p. 56

jurisdiction in the hours before the storm began; Jefferson officials had evacuated their residents days earlier, and were concerned that criminal elements may turn to looting the abandoned residences of their community.⁶

Community evacuation plans such as existed for New Orleans are highly dependent on individual initiative and substance. In short, people are expected to pack themselves and their families in their own private vehicles, ensure they have sufficient gasoline and other supplies for the trip, and find suitable lodging at the chosen endpoint of their journey. What these plans do not take into consideration – and what became strikingly evident in the aftermath of the Katrina disaster, are the thousands of persons for whom a car, a tank of gas, and a motel room are an unaffordable luxury; those that, even given a mandatory order to evacuate, would have nowhere to go and no way to get there. Such unfortunate individuals were indeed noticed by others in the years and months leading up to the disaster – a 2004 article in National Geographic magazine told of “the car-less, aged, and infirmed” who would be left behind in an evacuation of New Orleans⁷ – but government officials failed to adequately account for them, even though their own evacuation plan, the City of New Orleans Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan, suggested that evacuation procedures begin 72 hours ahead of a potential emergency to give the

⁶ Fund, John. “Lazarus Act”, *The Wall Street Journal Political Diary*, December 11, 2006.

“approximately 100,000 citizens of New Orleans” who “do not have the means of personal transportation” adequate time to leave the area.⁸ Just how these persons would leave the area was not well considered in the Plan.

Military forces are uniquely qualified to assist in the evacuation and support of masses of people from an effected area. They are able to support local law enforcement officials in establishing egress routes, to include implementing contra-flow plans in which high-speed inbound routes are opened to outbound traffic. The New Orleans contra-flow scheme, revised after the poor traffic management evident in the evacuation for Hurricane Ivan in 2004, was roundly praised as effective in getting large numbers of people out of the metro area safely and relatively quickly⁹; it certainly reduced the anticipated congestion of the previous plan, an evaluation of which predicted the stranding of 250,000 or more people.¹⁰ One of the keys to the success of the New Orleans traffic management plan was the coordination in planning that took place between the state government and the effected Parishes.¹¹ The city of Houston, Texas (during the Hurricane Rita evacuation a few weeks later) also had a contra-flow plan in place, but

⁷ Bourne, Joel K. “Gone with the Water”, *National Geographic*, October 2004, pp 88-89.

⁸ Brinkley, op.cit., p. 20.

⁹ Ibid., p. 54.

¹⁰ Berger, Eric. “Keeping Its Head Above Water,” *Houston Chronicle*, December 1, 2001: A1+

¹¹ Ibid.

in this case it was implemented late due to a combination of poor decision making and lack of resources. Aerial photographs of outbound lanes overflowing with stalled traffic – while the adjacent inbound lanes sat empty and unused – stood in direct contradiction to government assertions that they were effectively managing the situation. Even as late as 2006, the status of established contra-flow plans for cities located in the Gulf Coast region was determined by the U.S. Department of Transportation to be just “marginally effective”.¹² Certainly the plans in place for cities that do not face the constant threat of seasonal hurricanes are no better established. It is also significant to note that local, state, and regional evacuation plans normally assume an anticipated event such as a hurricane; few if any take into consideration the need for mass evacuation from an unanticipated event such as a terrorist attack or other catastrophic incident.¹³

Although the redesigned Louisiana contra-flow plan worked well at the macro level, little to no serious consideration was given to determining the evacuation status of individual neighborhoods based on the relative threat they faced. Had planners better assessed which neighborhoods were most at risk of flooding during a hurricane, proportional assets could have been assigned to those locales, and evacuation procedures could have been initiated earlier. Such

¹² United States. Department of Transportation. *Report to Congress on Catastrophic Hurricane Evacuation Plan Evaluation*, Washington: June 1, 2006, p. ES-3.

¹³ Ibid., p. 1-3.

micro-level assessments, known as evacuation planning zones (EPZs), can be used to model traffic flow patterns to more adequately and efficiently move people out of the affected areas.¹⁴ Such models can even account for differences in human behavior and its effects, such as accidents brought about by panic, or interruptions to traffic flow brought about by a person's desire to return home in order to retrieve a pet.¹⁵ This type of evacuation traffic modeling has not been done extensively, nor have evacuation exercises been conducted or much coordination occurred between adjacent jurisdictions.¹⁶ Certainly the cost of such modeling is a significant factor in the decision of government agencies not to employ it; furthermore, the results of such planning can be made moot in a short time as a result of further residential or economic development in the area.

Notwithstanding the complexities of facilitating the moving of thousands of persons who are in at least some fashion able to move themselves, authorities who order the evacuation of an effected area must also account for those persons who do not have the means or ability to evacuate due to indigence, illness, incapacitation, or incarceration. Such special needs persons

¹⁴ Church, Richard L. and Ryan M. Sexton, "Modeling small area evacuation: Can existing transportation infrastructure impede public safety?", *Vehicle Intelligence and Transportation Analysis Laboratory, National Center for Geographic Information and Analysis*. Santa Barbara, CA: University of California, 2002, p. 6.

¹⁵ Ibid, p.7.

are best transported by civilian personnel who are specifically trained in dealing with their unique situation, but these professionals can be assisted in their duties by military personnel who have been trained in various levels of basic medical care. In the case of prison evacuation, National Guardsmen under the orders of the state governor can provide security in support of corrections and other law enforcement officers, particularly if these soldiers train regularly in these types of tasks or have experience transporting prisoners in an operational environment.

Medics and other military health-care professionals can staff and/or assist in the evacuation of hospitals and nursing homes, and can provide ambulance and mortuary services in the effected area if civilian services are overwhelmed.¹⁷ Veterinary services may also be needed in areas set up as temporary shelter; a significant unpredicted finding in the Katrina evacuation was the propensity of people to evacuate with pets in tow.¹⁸

In New Orleans, a sizeable portion of the population, particularly including the poor, regularly rely on public transportation in the conduct of their daily lives. For them, the fact that the evacuation of their city took place on a weekend was significant: regular bus routes and schedules were not in operation and bus drivers, through their union, were reluctant to work

¹⁶ United States. Department of Transportation, op.cit., p. ES-4

¹⁷ FM 3-28 (Draft), p. 7-7

¹⁸ United States. Department of Transportation, op.cit., p.

overtime because the city had earlier refused to enter into a work agreement with them (they had been working for the previous eighteen months without a contract) and did not authorize the funds to pay them for that weekend's work.¹⁹ The availability of buses – 360 city-owned and countless others controlled by schools and private companies – with licensed drivers was the critical missing element in the city's failure to evacuate nearly 100,000 persons from the threatened area.²⁰ Military personnel, if trained to a minimal standard in the safe operation of these vehicles, could have been pressed into service to move these citizens who normally would count on such public assets to meet their transportation requirements.

To mention the problems encountered with some union-represented employees is by no means an indictment of them all. Other labor organizations representing first responders in New Orleans raised some significant and legitimate points that require adjudication. The firefighter's union, for instance, was concerned that the families of its members would not be adequately cared for during the emergency in the absence of the firefighter.²¹ Certainly military personnel, active and reserve, would face the same types of concerns especially if they lived within the area immediately affected by the disaster. Such problems can be somewhat mitigated, however, by

¹⁹ Brinkley, op.cit., p. 92.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Ibid., p. 55.

utilizing military units from outside the affected area, or by providing support services to the families of military members. Admittedly, such services could be more readily provided within the sanctuary of an active-duty military base than in a civilian community, and would thereby be less readily accessible to the families of reserve-component personnel. Reserve-component units should ensure their members maintain an updated family evacuation plan as an ordinary part of their operational readiness assessment.

Execution

The resupply of motorists with food, fuel, and other staples along egress routes is another way that military forces can assist local authorities during evacuations. National Guardsmen in Pennsylvania performed just such a mission in February 2007 when an unexpected late-season snowstorm closed a major section of a busy interstate highway for more than 24 hours.²²

As previously stated, it may be asking a lot to assume that every evacuating motorist is adequately prepared for the trip. They may not be able to afford enough gasoline, or may have neglected to or simply not had sufficient notice to fill up in anticipation of the event. In cases such as these, military fuel trucks can establish ad-hoc fueling points along evacuation routes, or

can resupply existing gas stations to meet unexpected demand. Additionally, they can contract for and supervise fuel hauling by civilian tankers, and can operate gas stations whose employees have themselves evacuated the area, thus facilitating a “controlled looting” or “unusual procurement” situation in which evacuees get the resources they need in a desperate situation without resorting to violence and theft. Once civilian needs are taken care of, military fuelers can provide similar services to the operators of emergency response vehicles.

Military and other government facilities may be utilized as temporary shelters for evacuees for whom motels and other lodging is unavailable or unaffordable. Supervision of these facilities by military personnel will assure that evacuees are housed in a clean and safe environment. Military personnel may also assist law enforcement officers in providing security at non-military facilities used to shelter evacuees. The Department of Transportation noted that, as a result of the lessons learned from evacuations during Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, the availability of food, water, restrooms, fuel, and shelter along evacuation routes was a primary obstacle to the safe and effective evacuation of threatened areas.²³

²² “Disaster Emergency Declared Statewide in Pennsylvania,” Emergency Management, March 2007: accessed online at www.emergencymgmt.com/story.php?id=103960.

²³ United States. Department of Transportation, op.cit., p. ES-7

Local shelters, set up and run by local governments on behalf of those persons who could not or would not evacuate the area, may need some military support in order to function adequately. Shelters may be required at the tail end of an evacuee's journey as well: by mid-afternoon of the day before Hurricane Katrina was scheduled to make landfall, most motel rooms in northern Louisiana (outside of the immediate danger area) were booked full.²⁴

Although local contracting of goods is the preferred method of logistics for all disaster relief operations²⁵, transportation (including lift), resupply of food, water, and other necessities, and local security can all be provided by military personnel in cooperation with local governments, law enforcement personnel, and service organizations in the event that civilian suppliers are unavailable or overwhelmed. In the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, National Guard soldiers were delivering as many as 300,000 prepackaged meals (Meals, Ready-to-Eat or MREs) to stranded citizens per day initially; upon activation of federal, active-duty military logistics assets a few days later, those numbers increased threefold.²⁶ Indeed, the military supply system was the only effective means of obtaining critical supplies through official government channels during the crisis: FEMA did not have the situational awareness of its own supply system to

²⁴ Brinkley, op.cit., p. 55

²⁵ FM 3-28 (Draft), p.7-5

accurately track and predict shipments of goods.²⁷ The agency has since purchased over 20,000 Global Positioning System (GPS) transmitters to allow it to track shipments of emergency supplies in-transit.²⁸ Still, military logistics assets may be valuable in distributing these goods to the end user when damage to critical infrastructure such as roads and bridges prevents the passage of civilian transport.

In the days immediately following the landfall of Hurricane Katrina, and for most of the next week, military communications suites were the only ones able to operate effectively due to the heavily damaged infrastructure in the area. Landline telephones were put out of commission due to the flooding, and the lack of electricity and damage to transmission towers rendered most cellular phone communications inoperable.²⁹ Walkie-talkie type cell phones generally worked better than the dial-up variety – until they too used up the initial charge of their battery.³⁰

The failure of the communications infrastructure had the second order effect of making useless the city's 911 system, and prevented effective interoperability between disaster-response operators on the ground and their superiors manning command posts at City Hall and in Baton

²⁶ Cooper, Christopher and Robert Block. *Disaster: Hurricane Katrina and the Failure of Homeland Security*. New York: Times Books, p. 207

²⁷ Ibid., p. 202

²⁸ Reiss, Cory. "FEMA scrambles to reform before new hurricane season". *Sarasota Herald Tribune*, March 4, 2007: B1+

Rouge and Washington. The Operations chief for FEMA, put on the ground by helicopter near the Superdome with only a cell phone, was soon completely dependent on the National Guard for everything from communications to security.³¹

Yet despite its near-unique ability to communicate with superiors and subordinates, Louisiana Army National Guard units in New Orleans rendered themselves incapable of performing to their maximum capability due to inadequate foresight about the extent of potential damage from the expected event. Specifically, they consolidated units and equipment at a single site in order to better facilitate command and control of the situation.³² Unfortunately for them, the flood waters isolated that site to the point where they were unable to effectively deploy their assets to accomplish the mission. Some previously-deployed small units, such as the command post established in the vicinity of the Superdome, were able to perform admirably by taking independent action to meet with local crises. As has been proven effective in counterinsurgency operations, small autonomous units were particularly useful in responding to victims' needs in the New Orleans disaster area, while reserve and support forces would have been better staged

²⁹ Cooper, op.cit., pg. 169

³⁰ Ibid., p. 175

³¹ Ibid., p. 163

³² Brinkley, op.cit., p. 52

outside of the immediate operational area in order to ensure the safety of these units and to maintain maximum operational flexibility.³³

One government paramilitary unit that displayed an almost textbook performance in the exercise of mission-focused initiative was the Federal Protective Service (FPS), an arm of the Homeland Security Department charged with providing local security for FEMA officials and for federal property during a disaster situation. After securing a federal building within a few blocks of the Superdome, FPS agents began patrolling nearby streets in a wider and wider arc, pursuing a COIN-like “oil spot” strategy to reclaim and secure several city blocks. Additionally, FPS was able to set up a communications network that began, for the first time in the crisis, to relay on-the-ground information directly to federal operations centers in Washington, including the White House.³⁴ While the information gathered by the FPS agents was indeed valuable in providing situational awareness to federal decision makers, the conduit they established had the additional affect – due to the lack of similar pipelines at the state and local levels – of increasingly allowing officials at the highest levels of government to micromanage operations on the scene.³⁵

³³ Cooper, op.cit., p. 238

³⁴ Ibid., p. 174

³⁵ Ibid., p. 181

The conduct and success of the FPS in achieving its mission in New Orleans while so many other government organizations were stumbling confirms the necessity and importance of following established military precepts when faced with an unfamiliar or chaotic situation. Simple measures such as conducting local assessment patrols can go a long way toward recognizing, and eventually solving, problems. The subunits of FEMA charged with taking such action – the Rapid Needs Assessment Teams – did not always adequately perform this function, and as a result were finding pockets of desperate and needy citizens, sometimes almost by accident, a week after the incident began.³⁶

Indeed, it is sometimes simple initiative – exemplified best in the military “can-do” attitude – that is most useful in uncertain situations. In the quest to provide outbound transportation for the thousands of persons sheltered temporarily at the Louisiana Superdome, FEMA had requisitioned a fleet of modern, comfortable, air-conditioned buses. The exact status of the buses, however, was unknown. In the meantime, state officials were gathering together any type of bus they could find, air-conditioned or not. FEMA officials, believing that their own buses were on the way, turned down the offer of buses from the state, so the search for buses by Louisiana officials was halted.

³⁶ Ibid., p. 226

Frustrated at the lack of visible results, Louisiana Army National Guard Brigadier General Brod Veillon took matters into his own hands. Boarding his helicopter, he soon found a group of 35 buses – part of the contingent initially gathered together by state officials – and ordered them to move to the Superdome.³⁷ This was just one example of how military precepts can make positive results happen in less-than-ideal conditions. By focusing on the end result and not demanding perfection, General Veillon was able to cut through confusion and indecisiveness in order to accomplish a task.

These types of actions, the kind that military personnel do on a regular basis, began to bring order and calm to New Orleans. From the temporary shelter housed in the Convention Center, rumors had circulated of incredible lawlessness: armed gangs, rapes, murders. A unit of the Arkansas Army National Guard was tasked to regain control of the situation, but instead found little of the problems that had been reported. In an instant, these soldiers changed their mission – and their attitude – from armed suppression of an uprising, to assisting with the loading of peaceful citizens onto buses.³⁸

The type of individual initiative displayed by BG Veillon and countless others during the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina solved numerous problems brought about through insufficient

³⁷ Ibid., p. 186

planning, and no doubt brought unexpected relief to thousands who had grown weary of their own predicament and their government's inaction towards it. Daring, however, only accounts for so much; what is needed for future operations of this type is a distinct operational doctrine that lays out what is expected of the U.S. military and its civilian partners in this type of environment. Just such doctrine is being proven on the streets of Baghdad as we speak.

³⁸ Ibid., p. 216

CHAPTER TWO

ADAPTATION OF US ARMY/MARINE CORPS COUNTERINSURGENCY/STABILITY OPERATIONS DOCTRINE TO DISASTER RESPONSE

An unlucky coincidence of the timing of Hurricane Katrina's landfall was that major units of the Louisiana and Mississippi Army National Guard, military forces on call to the governor of a state in time of emergency, were at the time deployed overseas in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. While this unfortunate circumstance was seized upon by critics of the President as evidence of the administration's incompetence in both the Katrina disaster response and in the conduct of the war, the short-term effect of the absence of state-controlled military forces in this instance should be weighed against the long-term benefits inherent in the experiences gained by these soldiers while on assignment overseas. Standing agreements in place between various state governments allowed for the sharing of National Guard assets during times of emergency; these pacts, if implemented in a timely manner, would be sufficient to offset any local shortfalls in personnel and equipment. Less easily remedied, however, would be the lack of a coherent strategy for using those forces in support of civilian disaster response efforts. The experience gained by military units in the conduct of COIN/Stability operations provides just such a framework.

While the detonation of improvised explosive devices (IEDs) and rocket-propelled grenades (RPGs) and their resulting destruction dominate the news stories of the war that reach the American public, the predominant effort of coalition forces revolves around activities that are somewhat more mundane but are nevertheless even more important: providing security for the citizens of the affected region, restoring essential services, and re-establishing the ability of local and regional governments to function. As it turns out, these activities are precisely equivalent to the tasks required of a military force in response to a domestic disaster. Rather than being a detriment and a hindrance to soldiers later expected to perform domestic disaster relief duties,

active service in the Global War on Terror – particularly in the Iraq and Afghanistan theaters with their emphasis on counterinsurgency, and in other operations providing security to failed and failing states around the world—should be viewed within the context of full-spectrum operations as the best disaster-relief training available. FM 3-28 (Draft) specifically notes the usefulness of these wartime skills in enhancing civil support operations.³⁹

The recently-published Army Field Manual (FM) 3-24 (also published as Fleet Marine Field Manual (FMFM) 3-24), *Counterinsurgency*, provides a model that can be readily adapted by local, state, and national civilian and military leaders to deal with the complexities involved in disaster response. Although it may be technically inaccurate, even politically incorrect, to equate the forces that instigate and perpetuate a domestic disaster as an *insurgency*⁴⁰, the effects in most if not all cases are the same. Whether engendered by an active hostile paramilitary effort or through the force of nature, any such events can serve to “creat(e) chaos to undercut and reduce governmental legitimacy and authority, and foster . . . overall instability”⁴¹. Similarly, criminal elements within the general community may seek to take advantage of periods of diminished government control to achieve their own ends, adding to the sense of instability created by the

³⁹ FM 3-28 (Draft), p.ix.

⁴⁰ JP 1-02 defines an insurgency as “an organized movement aimed at the overthrow of a constituted government through the use of subversion and armed conflict”.

initial incident. It becomes the role of military forces in both scenarios to provide for an orderly and timely return to pre-event conditions, “render(ing) required assistance” to civil authorities “as well as perform(ing) traditionally nonmilitary tasks” such as conducting search and rescue, providing basic human services, and supporting law enforcement agencies.⁴² As with stability operations performed in an overseas environment, military forces performing civil response operations must “perform all tasks necessary to establish or maintain a safe and secure environment in the absence of a legitimate” – or incapacitated – “civil governing authority.”⁴³

As in counterinsurgency (COIN) operations, disaster response is primarily an exercise in providing stability, with offensive and defensive operations being performed in secondary proportion to and in general support of the overall stability concept. While the offensive and defensive portions of the conflict spectrum will most likely include combat operations in a true COIN environment, the likelihood of such violent confrontation in a disaster response situation will be greatly reduced. Operations of an offensive or defensive nature will more likely take on a deterrent quality in order to prevent the initiation of episodes of civil unrest, rather than to react to them after the fact with non-deadly or deadly force. Examples of offensive measures include the

⁴¹ FM 3-24, *Counterinsurgency*, p. vi.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ FM 3-07, *Stability Operations* (Draft), p.1-1.

conduct of “presence patrols” to give the citizens a sense that the government is active in their neighborhood; defensive measures might include the provision of visible security posts at government buildings, key infrastructure nodes, retail businesses, and other institutions that are susceptible to vandalism and looting by a desperate and disgruntled populace. These types of protective actions, while taken to prevent the spread of lawlessness, are understood to not violate Constitutional injunctions against the use of federal forces in a law enforcement role.⁴⁴

The Civilian Population as a Center of Gravity

Control of public perception during disaster relief operations is, as with COIN, key to establishing a mindset that the government is effectively mitigating the damage caused by the disruptive influence. The population will generally, as in a counterinsurgency situation, be divided into three distinct camps: a minority who actively supports government efforts to re-establish pre-event levels of security, another minority who will be just as actively opposed to those efforts, and the remaining majority who is non-committal to either side but who simply favors a return to normalcy – by whichever side can provide it more quickly.

⁴⁴ FM 3-28 (Draft), p. 3-25

The first of these groups – the pro-government minority – is best characterized by the proverbial “good citizen” who, in the wake of catastrophic events such as Hurricane Katrina, set off in their own boats to rescue stranded persons or, by virtue of previously established employment or volunteer affiliations (as with the local chapter of the American Red Cross), performed such duties as evacuating animals from SPCA shelters or helping move nursing home residents to less-threatened facilities. In Evangeline Parish, a Cajun-populated rural district nearly bereft of any type of government assistance in the days and weeks immediately following the hurricane, locals offered shelter and sustenance to nearly 5000 evacuees from New Orleans and other low-lying areas; the citizens of Evangeline referred to these refugees as “company”, feeling any other term too pejorative, and thus impolite.⁴⁵ In establishing tasks for military forces to perform during emergency response situations, planners should take into consideration the added value of providing manpower, supply, and transportation support to these types of groups and individuals, who become “combat multipliers” when the service workload exceeds the capacity of the normal apparatus of government.

Of the minority which is oriented toward disrupting or otherwise disdaining government intervention in the crisis, two distinct groups emerge. On one side are those that see the lack of

⁴⁵ Reed, Betsy, ed., op.cit., p. 120.

governmental supervision as an opportunity to engage in illegal activities, such as the looting of stores, burglary of abandoned housing, or the physical intimidation of one's fellow citizens for the purpose of robbery, rape, and murder. Military personnel, especially National Guardsmen who operate under state jurisdiction and are therefore less constrained than federal troops in their role as law enforcers, can be used effectively in support of local and state police in providing the increased levels of personal and property security necessary during an emergency situation.

A second subgroup seeking to gain advantage from the deteriorated social situation following a disaster are those individuals and groups who are politically opposed to those who are currently in power. Although these persons may have a legitimate role to play in domestic society, it is proper for a military professional supporting disaster relief operations to stand apart from any political infighting and to support the goals of the duly-elected and appointed leaders who are managing relief efforts. Within that context, one must recognize the public and political perceptions of any given action, and act in such a way that reestablishes the security of the population, restores essential services, and reinforces the legitimacy of the government. It is essential to recognize that in a domestic response situation, most if not all actors are United States citizens, and must be treated accordingly.⁴⁶

⁴⁶ FM 3-28 (Draft), p. 1-8.

The key portion of the population is, of course, that vast majority for whom the crisis is neither an opportunity to rebel nor to shine, but one merely to survive. They are looking for government agencies to come to their aid, and will be relieved and grateful if that should happen. They can just as easily, though, turn to less legitimate methods of survival – and, in the most drastic of circumstances, be co-opted by those demanding radical political solutions to the crisis – should government-provided services fail to materialize. During the Katrina disaster, several pawnshops and gun stores were looted of their stock of firearms, some ostensibly by otherwise upright citizens looking to arm themselves in self-defense.⁴⁷ As in counterinsurgency operations, winning over this portion of the population is the key to success in disaster relief: provide the masses with the security and essential services they require to survive the initial impact of the disaster, and their belief in the legitimacy of the government will increase while their active and passive support for those in opposition to the government, and their own slide towards lawlessness, will decrease.

To provide the necessary elements to meet the requirements of this portion of the population in the aftermath of a disaster, military personnel must – in cooperation with civilian authorities and other community role players such as business entities – be willing to look for and

⁴⁷ Cooper, op.cit., p. 168

implement solutions that would normally appear unorthodox, or even counterintuitive. An example of such a solution is that of “controlled looting”.

There exists a common understanding that it is illegal to break into a retail store and take items without paying for them. It would make sense, then, for someone charged with maintaining security to prevent such things from happening, even resorting to deadly force in accordance with established rules of engagement (termed “rules of use of force” in civil response operations⁴⁸) to prevent the loss of property. In the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, some public sentiment existed that the authorities should “shoot the looters” to maintain law and order in New Orleans.

The extent of the Katrina disaster, however, had changed the dynamic to where this situation was no longer recognizable as a simple “law and order” issue. Having survived for several days with little to no food, fresh water, and other necessities, some citizens took to entering abandoned grocery stores in order to collect these staples for their own use. The ordinary processes of commerce had broken down, and the government was not stepping in to provide relief, so the citizens made do as best they could. Many of these citizens may have started as part of the “support the government” minority; certainly most of them were of the uncommitted majority; but when the government failed to act in their best interests, more and

⁴⁸ FM 3-28 (Draft), p. 3-9

more began to look out for themselves. Although most were not yet technically a part of the anti-government minority, they had entered that gray area on the edge of criminal, anti-social activity that would further serve to weaken the overall security situation and with it the legitimacy of the government.

Sensing pending social disaster should the looting continue, some enterprising law enforcement and military personnel, in cooperation with businesses such as a local Wal-Mart store, began to offer their merchandise to distressed citizens for free in a cooperative, controlled manner which became euphemistically known as “unusual procurement”.⁴⁹ People received the basic items necessary for their continued survival, businesses could maintain a semblance of inventory control while achieving goodwill with their customer base, and law enforcement officials were able to stem the growing lawlessness within their communities. Through innovative thinking, the trend toward anarchy was reversed.

Integrating Military and Civilian Response Efforts

As with counterinsurgency operations, an effective disaster relief operation is the result of using military assets to supplement and reinforce civilian authorities. While it may be

⁴⁹ Cooper, op.cit., p. 260

necessary in the initial stages of a crisis for military units and personnel to take a more active and up-front role in meeting the fundamental needs of the population, this must always be done with the appearance of, if not the actual, orchestration by civilian agencies. Civilian leaders, elected or appointed to public office, are directly answerable to their constituents in a way that military forces are not; their legitimacy as members of the government, and of the government itself, is tied to the public perception that these leaders are competent to lead the citizens through a crisis. Furthermore, local governmental and non-governmental organizations have a better understanding of the needs of the population as a result of familiarity; they are inherently better able to determine the best use of assets within their defined area of operations. As such, unity of command within a disaster relief operation must always radiate from a source of civilian authority, preferably at the lowest possible level of government.⁵⁰ Critically inherent in this process, however, is the need to include all participants – government, military, and non-government – in every aspect of response planning in order to make the most efficient use of every available asset and to reduce duplication of effort. The term “unity of command” in this

⁵⁰ FM 3-28 (Draft), p. 13.

instance does not, however, imply a superseding of the military chain of command; it simply suggests an atmosphere of mutual cooperation among various agencies.⁵¹

The distinction between military and civilian roles in disaster response comes of critical importance in the event of an attack on the United States, its citizens, or its critical infrastructure by a hostile agent. By presidential directive, the Department of Defense is designated the lead agency for Homeland Defense, and will be supported by other government agencies during the initial crisis. Other civil support/disaster relief operations, to include recovery from a Homeland Defense incident, will see another agency in the lead; military forces will provide support to that effort.⁵²

The Bottom-Up Flow of Intelligence

One of the most striking lessons learned from the Hurricane Katrina response effort was that much of the information being reported on open-source outlets such as major television news networks and analyzed through national-level command centers was flatly wrong.⁵³ Meanwhile, intelligence gathered on the ground was rendered useless by poor communications planning:

⁵¹ Ibid., p. 23.

⁵² Ibid., p.1-1.

⁵³ Cooper, op.cit., p. 169.

with the exception of the units of the Louisiana National Guard⁵⁴, no government entity within the flooded areas of the city could consistently transmit messages to its higher headquarters during the initial stages of the disaster response effort.

Field Manual 3-24 stresses the importance of bottom-up intelligence gathering and dissemination due to the local nature of insurgent activity. Likewise, relief workers in New Orleans found that the extent of the disaster differed greatly from neighborhood to neighborhood, and that what was reported in one location contradicted what was reported from a few blocks away, in some cases with major effect on the status of relief operations. For instance, Phil Parr, the operations manager for FEMA, helicoptered in to the vicinity of the New Orleans Superdome and reported to his boss, FEMA Director Brown, that all of the streets in the vicinity were impassable. As a result, Brown decided not to dispatch FEMA's fleet of high-technology communications trucks to the city, a decision that effectively removed Brown's organization from the decision-making process for the remainder of the operation. In reality, though, the streets around Parr's command post, though partially flooded, were indeed passable, and were being used on a regular basis by volunteer rescue teams.⁵⁵ Parr's lack of situational awareness –

⁵⁴ Ibid, p. 178.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

brought about by a scarcity of bottom-up intelligence about the operational area – critically crippled the federal response to the Katrina disaster.

Since intelligence drives operations in both a counterinsurgency and disaster relief operations, much Katrina planning at the higher echelons of state and national government was based on false assumptions⁵⁶, and at times on mere rumor.⁵⁷ On the ground, however, small units were able to correctly assess the local situation and act with determination and decisiveness, confirming the COIN premise that individual Soldiers and Marines are among the most effective intelligence collectors.

To supplement the bottom-up intelligence gathered in the wake of a domestic disaster, planners can make appropriate use of technical and administrative data as part of their intelligence data base. Information that the local government collects as a normal part of doing business – property records, addresses of persons with special needs, etc. – can be useful in responding to a disaster. Additionally, technical devices that help the community function efficiently on a day-to-day basis, such as traffic and surveillance cameras, can become valuable intelligence collectors in an emergency situation. Pure military assets, such as satellite data

⁵⁶ Ibid., p. 207.

⁵⁷ Ibid., p. 168.

provided by the Geospatial Intelligence Agency, can supplement this locally-procured information.

The Execution of Disaster Response Operations

Even if the event itself is somewhat predictable, the location and extent of damage inflicted on people and infrastructure as a result of a natural or man-made disaster always comes as a surprise to the government agency charged with response; therefore a disaster, like an insurgency, starts by seizing the initiative from the forces of stability and order. With that initiative comes control of the information environment: suddenly the newspapers, websites, and airwaves are full of descriptions and images of what has been wrought; among the populace, rumors abound. The disaster, like an insurgent's surgical strike, was quick and devastating; the government's response will be long-taking and expensive.⁵⁸ People have suffered, and continue to do so as the response takes shape.

As in fighting a counterinsurgency, disaster response follows logical lines of operation that are people-focused, and are tied to re-establishing the legitimacy of the government by

⁵⁸ FM 3-24, p. 1-2.

regaining security and restoring essential services.⁵⁹ Information operations are critical to the overall success of the mission, which deals first and foremost with public perceptions about the ability of government to respond to the needs of its citizens. Within this formula, military forces support other agencies such as law enforcement, non-governmental organizations, and private corporations (to include news organizations) to limit the initial damage pertaining to the disaster and assist in recovery of essential services, thus reducing the real and perceived effects of the incident.⁶⁰ In addition to providing the security necessary for these services to be provided, military organizations will also be required to provide supply and transportation services in areas where the civilian infrastructure is damaged beyond use.

As the effects of the disaster are controlled or mitigated, responsibility for the conduct of operations are transitioned to the appropriate civilian authorities⁶¹, to include state and federal agencies with expertise in restoring the economic infrastructure of the affected area. To an even greater extent than in typical counterinsurgency operations, disaster relief and recovery is a true interagency operation where the role of military forces are limited, and subordinated to civilian authority throughout the planning and execution of the operation. Of the fifteen recognized

⁵⁹ Ibid., p. 2-2.

⁶⁰ Ibid., p. 5-2.

⁶¹ Ibid.

Emergency Support Functions (ESFs) described by the federal government as pertaining to emergency response operations, none list the Department of Defense as the primary responsible agency.⁶² As such, the effect of military operations in a disaster relief environment can be measured less broadly than in a COIN situation; such indicators of military success will necessarily revolve around the provision of security and essential services in the immediate afterward of the event, and to some extent in the efficiency with which core responsibilities are able to be turned over to civilian authorities.⁶³ Other indicators of progress, such as the return of displaced persons or the improvement of economic conditions remain outside the purview of military action; doctrinally, military support to civilian agencies has significantly decreased during the restoration phase of operations.⁶⁴

Emerging Army Stability Operations doctrine recognizes that the phenomenon of a failed or failing state – one that lacks the capability to effectively govern its own territory or people – will come about due to any number of factors, to include economic collapse, competition for scarce resources, failed infrastructure, or governmental mismanagement.⁶⁵ Domestically, these same situations may develop, although given the depth, breadth, and flexibility of the American

⁶² Department of Transportation, p. 2-4.

⁶³ FM 3-28 (Draft), p. 1-10.

⁶⁴ Ibid., p. 3-28

economic and political systems it will most likely take a catastrophic event – such as a devastating natural disaster or massive terrorist attack – to serve as a catalyst. Should this occur, the military response on the domestic front will look very much like the measures taken to regain stability overseas: establish security, provide immediate humanitarian assistance as needed, and restore basic services and infrastructure.

As with providing stability capabilities to failed or failing states, military forces involved in civil response operations cannot provide, and are not expected to provide, the key ingredients to allow for the return to stability.⁶⁶ While the military effort may be among the most critical in re-establishing a safe and secure environment during the initial stages of the crisis and in providing essential services in the immediate aftermath of the incident, the full integration of all governmental and non-governmental agencies at the local, state, and federal level is necessary to ensure the complete recovery of a devastated region along the full political, economic, and social spectrum. The military's role, then, is simply to set the conditions under which other organizations may be successful.

While it is possible to set those conditions on the ground through a massive and sustained military deployment in the wake of a catastrophic incident, it is much preferable – given the

⁶⁵ FM 3-07 (Draft), p.1-4

military's current operational tempo and the National Guard's updated role as a part of that operational force – to leverage military assets and know-how in the planning and preparation of disaster response to allow other agencies to take a larger role in disaster mitigation and response. One such method of effective support to civil authorities is to make military personnel and assets available to civilian agencies through the establishment of an interagency base of operations that allows all components of disaster response at all echelons of government the ability to work together on a continuous basis to ensure compatibility and mutual support in the event of a

⁶⁶ Ibid., p. 1-5

significant natural or man-made event. Such a project is currently under consideration at a former Naval Air Station in southeastern Pennsylvania.

CHAPTER THREE

WILLOW GROVE: A MODEL FOR TRUE INTERAGENCY COORDINATION IN PLANNING AND PREPARATION FOR FUTURE DISASTER RESPONSE EFFORTS⁶⁷

As noted in previous chapters, no mission more demands the close integration and coordination of diverse governmental and non-governmental agencies at the local, state, and federal level than that of Homeland Security and Disaster Response. At the federal level alone, there are more than sixty government organizations that maintain some type of Homeland Security responsibility⁶⁸; state and local governments mirror these agencies in focus if not in scope. Additionally, public and private non-profit and for-profit organizations maintain equipment, facilities, and trained personnel that can greatly supplement government efforts in response to a natural or man-made disaster. Close and effective coordination between these

⁶⁷ All information in this chapter, unless otherwise cited, was obtained from the report, *Interagency Base Willow Grove (Draft)*, copyright 2006, IAB Willow Grove, used with permission of the author, COL Paul Comtois, 111th Fighter Wing, PaANG. This report is classified FOUO.

⁶⁸ United States. Department of the Air Force. *Emergency Management Program, Senior Leader Primer 2006: Federal Support to the States*. Washington: 2006.

various entities during planning and execution of disaster relief operations is critical to the timeliness and overall effectiveness of such efforts.

Effective disaster response also demands that the infrastructure necessary to conduct relief operations be not itself overly susceptible to damage or destruction as a result of the incident. New York City's operations center, set up in the immediate aftermath of the planes striking the World Trade Center towers on September 11, 2001, was itself later threatened by its close proximity to the falling buildings; likewise, designated command centers at all levels in New Orleans were rendered unusable in the wake of Hurricane Katrina due to impassable road networks or by the failure of critical support systems such as electricity and telephone service.

Optimally then, a comprehensive solution would provide the affected organizations with facilities that would allow them to train together on a regular basis across the artificial vertical and horizontal boundaries engendered by the agencies' operational echelon or status. Such facilities would furthermore provide the critical infrastructure facilities and systems to serve as a base for disaster response operations. They would necessarily be physically proximate to the areas potentially at greatest risk to severe social and economic damage in the event of a disaster, yet far enough removed that the facilities themselves would not be rendered inoperable as a result of the catastrophe.

The former Willow Grove Naval Air Station in southeastern Pennsylvania, near Philadelphia, provides a model for such a facility. Even before its reorganization under the auspices of the Base Realignment and Closure Commission (BRAC) in 2005, Willow Grove served as a joint-service, multi-component installation: the US Navy, Marine Corps Reserve, Army Reserve, Air Force Reserve, and Air National Guard all maintained facilities at the base. The BRAC report, signed into law in November 2005, removes the Navy and Marine Corps units only, while explicitly specifying that the Air National Guard units maintain their presence on the

base, and recommending a new, upgraded facility be built on the premises for the Army Reserve.⁶⁹

Meanwhile, the new domestic security environment made evident by the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 engaged the federal government to publish a series of plans and directives that called upon governments at all levels to rethink and retool their disaster response structures and procedures. Specifically, it encouraged the coordination and integration of emergency preparedness and response assets across the public and private spectrum. In response to these initiatives, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania undertook the project of turning the Willow Grove Naval Air Station into a multi-function, interagency hub specifically tailored to meet the diverse requirements of disaster response operations.

The proposed installation, named Interagency Base (IAB) Willow Grove, will provide the office and administration space, storage capacity, hangar facilities, vehicle and aircraft maintenance areas, and sufficient billeting and housing for a wide variety of disaster response organizations whether conducting day-to-day operations, providing training to outside agencies, or surging during an emergency response situation.

⁶⁹ BRAC Commission Report

Encompassing 1200 acres in suburban Horsham Township, Montgomery County, Willow Grove contains a recently-renovated 8,000 foot runway and an air traffic control tower equipped with modern, state-of-the-art radar; 817,708 square feet of hangar space; 852,975 square feet of office and other administrative areas; 116,285 square feet of maintenance facilities for both vehicles and aircraft; and 335,455 square feet of billeting and housing. Moreover, it is totally self-sufficient in all utilities, and could therefore maintain full operations even in the event of a complete failure of the civilian power grid. In addition, military units currently stationed at Willow Grove maintain the additional capacity of providing communications infrastructure support for an area the size of a small city. As with any typical closed military installation, base security operations are continually ongoing.

In support of the Commonwealth's plan to establish IAB Willow Grove, nearly a dozen federal, local, and non-governmental agencies have signed letters of intent to move their southeastern Pennsylvania operations to the airfield. Additionally, the Pennsylvania National Guard will build new facilities to house twelve of its most modernized company-sized units, to include the headquarters of its top-grade Stryker Brigade Combat Team, at Willow Grove. Finally, in keeping with the recommendations of the BRAC study, the Army Reserve will consolidate units from six area Reserve Centers to the base.

The Department of Defense-affiliated units stationed or proposed for IAB Willow Grove bring an enormous Homeland Security and Disaster Response capability to the base, including medical, transportation, chemical detection and decontamination, heavy equipment, aviation assets, and satellite telecommunications. As an example the 270th Electronic Installation Squadron (EIS), Pennsylvania Air National Guard, is uniquely qualified to install and maintain a wide variety of communications equipment, from ground stations to antennas, with wire cable or fiber optics. They can install and troubleshoot radios, weather forecasting equipment, and navigational aids. The 56th Stryker Brigade Combat Team Headquarters commands and controls several National Guard combat arms and support battalions and separate companies located

across the state; one battalion's worth of company armories are distributed throughout the immediate suburban Philadelphia area. In an emergency response situation, the 56th Brigade is also capable of assuming operational control over a wide variety of smaller National Guard units located in southeastern Pennsylvania. In a disaster of such magnitude that direct federal intervention is required, the military units of the Army Reserve and Air Force Reserve can contribute additional manpower, expertise, and equipment. The 913th Airlift Wing is particularly suited to this role, flying C-130 cargo planes in aerial resupply missions. Operations of the 913th at Willow Grove, however, will cease in September 2007 unless the implementation of the IAB persuades the Department of Defense to reconsider this phase of the planned base reconsolidation under BRAC.⁷⁰

Federal agencies interested in collocating within the IAB include the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and the Defense Logistics Agency (DLA), each of which has a significant role to play in Disaster Response operations. HHS, an agency whose interests include preventing the spread of disease through natural or diabolical means, views IAB Willow Grove as an optimal base camp for medical service providers in an emergency situation such as an influenza outbreak, as well as a

⁷⁰ Goldstein, Steve. "Navy Denies State's Bid for Willow Grove Base", Philadelphia Inquirer, April 26,

regional training facility and as a centralized distribution point for critical supplies. The EPA will use Willow Grove as a base for the east coast operations of its fleet of specialized aircraft used to determine the source and extent of chemical and radiological contamination in the atmosphere.

As the coordinating body for disaster response at the national level, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is also highly interested in maintaining an interagency presence at Willow Grove. FEMA Region III, which is currently headquartered in Philadelphia and has responsibility for Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, West Virginia, Virginia, and the District of Columbia, will move their operations center to the base. Additionally, they will establish a Mobilization Center (integrated with existing joint service/interagency mobilization operations) and a Continuity of Operations Emergency Relocation Site. FEMA currently has a memorandum of understanding with the US Navy to use Willow Grove as a mobilization site in case of a disaster in the mid-Atlantic region; the base is particularly suited to FEMA operations due to its available outdoor and indoor storage spaces and administrative/office facilities, as well as its ability to land and unload large cargo aircraft such as the C-5A. Due to the centralized location of Willow Grove, FEMA also foresees the utility of the base as a logistics hub in support of FEMA operations in other regions along the country's eastern seaboard. Emerging Army

2007: B1.

doctrine specifically suggests that military logistics units coordinate with other agencies for the use of warehouses and staging areas⁷¹; the federal presence at Willow Grove will allow for that joint and interagency co-use.

FEMA's requirement to use Willow Grove as an alternate operations base stems from their concern that their primary facility, presently located in downtown Philadelphia, may be rendered unusable were a terrorist attack or other disaster to take place within the city. By having a second site available to them at Willow Grove, FEMA can assure continuity of operations throughout the period of disaster response and recovery. The Willow Grove site would also serve this function should the Philadelphia facility suffer from accidental damage, such as a building fire or utilities failure. FEMA's current contract for such a relocation site is maintained with the US Army Reserve Center on Willow Grove NAS.

Several other Philadelphia-based federal agencies have expressed similar concern about establishing a continuity center at Willow Grove. These include the Defense Contract Audit Agency, the Defense Criminal Investigative Service, the Defense Contract Management Agency Industrial Analysis Center, the Internal Revenue Service, the US Navy's Human Resources Service Center Northeast, and the Securities and Exchange Commission. The presence of these

⁷¹ FM 3-28 (Draft), p. 7-8

organizations at IAB Willow Grove reinforces the interagency nature of the base and helps to defray the overall costs of operating the installation.

The Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency (PEMA), the state-level equivalent of FEMA, would likewise establish operational facilities at Willow Grove. Additionally, two Pennsylvania Army National Guard units with specific Homeland Security missions would base here. The 3rd Civil Support Team (CST), military first responders to an attack with chemical, biological, radiological, Nuclear and Enhanced (CBRNE) agents, would pre-stage critical equipment at IAB Willow Grove in order to reduce response time to an incident in the FEMA Region III area of responsibility. The more robust and better-equipped follow-on forces to the CST, known as a Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear and Enhanced Response Force Package (CERFP), would likewise pre-position necessary equipment at the base. The CERFP would provide additional medical, engineering, and security support to the CST.

Operations of the Civil Air Patrol (CAP), a volunteer civilian organization with extensive capabilities to provide support to Homeland Security and Disaster Relief operations, would be enhanced at Willow Grove through the addition of a Wing Headquarters, a Mission Operations Unit, and a Hyperspectral Imaging Platform Unit. These organizations would supplement the Group Headquarters and the operational Squadron currently stationed at the base. These assets will give the CAP additional assets to employ in search-and-rescue and aerial reconnaissance operations.

Perhaps the most innovative proposal to come out of the IAB Willow Grove concept is the creation of a regional Joint Readiness Center (JRC) which, despite the military-only nature of its proposed name, includes participants from across jurisdictional boundaries to include active and reserve component military; federal, state, and local government agencies, and non-governmental organizations to include private entities. Its purpose would be to “support enhanced national defense, homeland security and emergency and disaster response . . . through

the development of a centralized infrastructure that consolidates existing regional military, civilian, and institutional resources”.

The idea for a JRC came out of the 2005 BRAC report in its recommendations for consolidating military operations at the Pittsburgh International Airport Air Reserve Station in western Pennsylvania. The commission found it necessary to support maintaining a fleet of C-130 cargo aircraft at Pittsburgh in order to provide for improved homeland security, civil-military, and community-based medical support operations. In order to coordinate these diverse, multi-agency and multi-echeloned missions, the commission members further recommended establishing a regional coordinating body to oversee the establishment and scope of responsibility of such an entity. Interested public and private partners in the Pittsburgh area formed a “JRC Task Force” to serve in such a role.

Based on the initial enthusiasm engendered by the JRC concept in Pittsburgh, state-level officials in Pennsylvania sought to extend the idea to include a similar organization in the Philadelphia area. The interagency and cross-functional nature of the IAB concept lends itself perfectly to the establishment of a regional JRC at Willow Grove.

Despite enthusiasm from across the jurisdictional spectrum, significant legal hurdles continue to prevent active implementation of the IAB plan. A preliminary agreement that would

have transferred control of the base from the Navy to the Air Force, who would have then leased it to the Commonwealth, was recently deemed as legally unsupportable by existing Navy property disposal regulations.⁷² Additionally, the 3rd US Circuit Court of Appeals recently ruled against the Governor of Pennsylvania in his quest to save the 111th Fighter Wing, a Pennsylvania National Guard asset nominally under the command of the governor – and a tenant of Willow Grove – from being deactivated by the Department of Defense.⁷³

By combining the well-suited facilities of the Willow Grove air station with the capacities inherent in the multitude of joint and interagency, federal and state organizations committed to the Interagency Base project, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania has developed an innovative solution to the problems inherent in the effective integration of joint, interagency, and echeloned elements within the Homeland Security/disaster relief community. Robert P. Welch, the Director for National Preparedness in FEMA Region III, wholeheartedly agrees with the feasibility and utility of interagency cooperation at Willow Grove. He has stated that, “The planned mixture of . . . Air and Army National Guard and Army Reserve organizations represents a new and robust core. The capabilities of these units, along with the infrastructure of IAB

⁷² Goldstein, op cit.

⁷³ Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Office of the Governor. Press Release, April 18, 2007. Accessed online at: www.state.pa.us/papower/cwp/view.asp?Q=461793&A=11&pp=12&n=1

Willow Grove – especially in the event of a regional crisis – immensely support hosting FEMA Region III operations . . . Such synergistic effects of the elements presented here certainly would support the objectives laid out in the National Security Strategy, National Strategy for Homeland Security, and the National Defense Strategy . . . FEMA would greatly benefit from working and training with these military and civilian partners.”

CONCLUSION

While there are certainly differences between counterinsurgency operations and its potentially less intense cousin, civil support operations, the difference is really only one of degree. Recognizing that counterinsurgency implies, by definition, that an armed entity exists with the purpose of so damaging the credibility of the existing government to the point of its demise, so too during a domestic terrorist attack or major natural or man-made disaster does the legitimacy of the government come into serious question. Can it provide a safe and secure environment in which to live? Can it provide the basic services on which its citizens have come to depend? Can it provide the infrastructure and institutions necessary for continued societal and economic development? Depending on the severity of the incident in question, these concerns may become more pressing to American citizens than the activities of a rebel movement in a failing state is to the resident of that country. Certainly the potential immediate impact on the security of the United States, and of the political fortunes of its leaders, is more prevalent in the earlier case.

By applying the principles of counterinsurgency warfare to the military and civilian tasks required in a domestic emergency response situation, leaders from all agencies and at all echelons can maximize the effects of their actions through concerted, planned response to a wide variety of potential situations. By preparing for the worst, they can be prepared for the worst. In the more

likely event that the incident in question is not as bad as it could have been, the agencies charged with meeting the needs of citizens will be that much better prepared to provide the most possible assistance to the greatest amount of people possible, and thereby to recover from the devastating incident that much quicker.

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¹ JP 1-02 defines an insurgency as “an organized movement aimed at the overthrow of a constituted government through the use of subversion and armed conflict”.